GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2648
ANSWERED ON:04.12.2007
FREE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH ASEAN
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Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has discussed with his ASEAN counterparts, market access to ASEAN for sensitive agricultural products like palm oil, pepper and tea before the summit level talks on Free Trade Agreement(FTA);

(b) if so, the details thereof, country-wise;

(c) the names of agricultural products on which India offers its market access;

(d) whether the summit level talks on FTA was recently held in Singapore;

(e) if so, the issues discussed and the outcome thereof after such consultations; and

(f) the time by when India is likely to sign FTA with ASEAN?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (c) The negotiations for India-ASEAN FTA are ongoing and both sides are discussing various aspects of the proposed Agreement, including the Negative Lists, Sensitive Lists, Highly Sensitive List, Normal Track and the modalities for tariff concessions offered by both sides. The Negative List consists of items mostly of Agricultural products while the Highly Sensitive List consists of products like palm oil, pepper, tea and coffee.

(d) to (f) Yes, Sir. The ASEAN-India Summit was held on 21 November 2007 in Singapore. Prime Minister mentioned at the Summit that India would work together with ASEAN to conclude negotiations by March 2008. He also proposed a bilateral trade target of 50 billion US dollars by the year 2010.